

Standard 3-4: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the events that led to the Civil War, the course of the War and Reconstruction, and South Carolina's role in these events.

3.4.7 Summarize the effects of Reconstruction in South Carolina, including the development of public education, racial advancements and tensions, and economic changes. (H, E, P)

Taxonomy Level: B 2 Understand / Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

Students will have no prior knowledge of Reconstruction, advances in education, race or economic changes during this time period. Later in 3rd grade, students will learn about the effect of the Civil Rights movement in the 20th century (3-5.6).

In 4th grade, students will learn about the ideals of equality as described in the Declaration of Independence and how they were slow to take hold (4-4.6).

In 5th grade, students will learn about the aims of Reconstruction and the effect of Lincoln's assassination (5-1.1), the effect of Reconstruction on African Americans (5-1.3), and the economic and social effect of Reconstruction (5-1.4). Students will also learn about the rise of discriminatory laws and groups (5-1.5) and the advancement of Civil Rights movement in the 20th century (5-5.3).

In 8th grade, students will learn about the purposes of Reconstruction (8-4.1), events during Reconstruction that helped African Americans, including advances in education (8-4.4), the successes and failures of Reconstruction, including the development of public education (8-4.5), and conditions after Reconstruction (8-5.1). Students will also learn about racial discrimination and the Civil Rights movement (8-7.4).

In United States History and the Constitution, students will learn about the effects of Reconstruction (USHC 4.4) and the progress of African Americans during Reconstruction (USHC 4.5). Students will also learn about the education progress made by African Americans (USHC 4.5) and educational changes after World War II (USHC 9.1) and the civil rights movement (USHC 9.5).

It is essential for students to know

Reconstruction was a period of time after the end of the Civil War when the federal government protected the rights of newly freed slaves. It ended when the antebellum political elites regained control of the government and the freedmen were no longer protected. Reconstruction was **not** the process of rebuilding the Southern economy or its infrastructure, but of reconstructing southern society and government so that African Americans could have a role as free citizens and the southern states could be fully involved again in the national government. Lincoln and the national government never recognized that South Carolina had seceded from the Union. Although third grade students may not be able to understand the complexities of the constitutional questions that secession raised, it is important that this time period not be so oversimplified so that students have wrong ideas that must be corrected later.

Students should know that the first Reconstruction plan proposed by President Lincoln did not work because Confederate leaders were still in power and they did not protect the rights of newly freed slaves. Although South Carolina ratified the 13th amendment granting slaves their freedom, South Carolina leaders also passed Black Codes, laws that restricted the rights of the freed slaves so that they were free in name only. So, the second Reconstruction plan was passed by Congress, brought federal military intervention to the state and stripped the power from the former Confederate leaders. South Carolina was forced to ratify the 14th amendment, which recognized the right of African Americans to be treated as

citizens of the United States. The state also had to write a new state constitution that recognized these rights. Many African Americans were elected to serve in the convention that wrote the new constitution and later served in the state legislature. Congress later also passed another amendment which guaranteed African Americans the right to vote [15th amendment].

The South Carolina elite resented this national interference and the political role that African Americans could now play in state government. South Carolina whites called anyone who cooperated with the state government, a government in which African Americans were now allowed to participate, a ‘scalawag.’ They called northerners who came South as missionaries or for economic opportunity ‘carpetbaggers.’ South Carolina whites accused these people of trying to take advantage of the plight of the state after the war. Although some may have been corrupt, many so-called carpetbaggers and scalawags made significant positive contributions to the state

Racial tensions increased as African Americans gained rights and opportunities. Many whites refused to participate in state government so long as African Americans were able to vote and hold office. Some South Carolinians resented the freedmen and tried to intimidate them by burning their homes and churches so that they would not vote or exercise their rights. The Ku Klux Klan was active in South Carolina, particularly in the upcountry. Some African Americans and their white supporters were killed by the KKK. Although the national government sent troops to control the KKK and protect the freedmen, they were not able to eliminate the Klan.

The new state constitution required the establishment of the **public education system**. This was a positive result of Reconstruction for former slaves and poor whites who did not have access to education before the Civil War. However, public education intensified racial tensions because whites did not want to go to school with African Americans. Two separate school systems were therefore created. These segregated schools were not equal.

Economic changes after the war were slow to take hold. Fertile land and a suitable climate for agriculture meant that cotton would continue to be a dominant crop. Sharecroppers provided the labor (3-4.6). However, farmers were soon caught in a cycle of debt and poverty (3-5.3). Although the infrastructure was not immediately repaired, commerce continued. By the end of the century, entrepreneurs began to build textile mills in the state. The availability of natural resources, such as swift flowing rivers, impacted the state’s recovery. Textile mills used water power to run the machines that turned cotton into cloth.

It is not essential for students to know the specific Reconstruction plans of Presidents Lincoln and Johnson and of the Congress or the circumstances of, or the differences between, these plans. For instance, they do not need to know that President Lincoln’s plan was formulated before the end of the fighting and one purpose of its relatively easy terms was to persuade southern states to surrender. Later, when it was evident that the South Carolina government was determined to restrict the rights of freed slaves through the Black Codes, the Congress passed the military reconstruction plan to protect this outcome of the war. Students do not need to know that many of the historical interpretations of Reconstruction that were prevalent up until the time of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s have been reevaluated in light of recent scholarship. They should not be taught the negative interpretations of the role of so-called ‘scalawags’ and ‘carpetbaggers’ so that they will not have to unlearn this inaccurate history.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessments would require students to **summarize** the effects of Reconstruction in South Carolina. Students should be able to generalize the main points in the description of Reconstruction and the effects of Reconstruction on various groups. Appropriate assessments should also require students to

identify the causes of racial tension during Reconstruction, **explain** positive results of Reconstruction, such as the development of public education, and **compare** the conditions of a slave to a freedman.

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